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ARCHBISHOP TACHE

Thinks his Ideas with Regard to Religious Instruction in Schools fully Corroborated in England.

To the Editor of the Free Press.

Sir,—In the beginning of the establishment of Canadian authority in this country, there was little difficulty in securing denominational schools. After they had been acknowledged by law, efforts were made to change their character, but since 1877 nothing was attempted publicly in that direction. During these last twelve years, the cause of education has made great progress in Manitoba; the fact is, there are few new countries, if any, which have a larger development in that direction. Visitors of intelligence are in reality very much astonished at the harmonious and efficacious work of our system; as a rule the population is satisfied with the management of the schools, by the respective Boards, and if we can judge this management by the result, surely there is not much reason for complaint. I am perfectly aware that the system in itself does not meet the views of everyone. There are men, earnest and honest, who would like that it had never been established, but these very men, precisely for the same reasons, are anxious to avoid rash measures or violation of the rights of others.

Since last week there has been a good deal of talking and writing about the question of schools. Without attaching too much weight to what might have been said under certain impulses, or to please certain parties, I am fully aware of the importance of the question, and feel confident that no government will attempt any measure violating the acquired rights of any important section of the people of Manitoba. I cherish the idea that our public men are not to be guided by the narrow ideas of bigotted individuals who think it is a glorious thing to attack others and a meritorious one to do harm to their neighbors.

Ignorance is so great among such narrow-minded men that they think and they say that our system of schools is to be changed because it admits of religious instruction in conformity to the wishes of the parents, and to show more blindness they say that the ideas which have been predominant in our system are "medieval relics, fit for priestly ridden people; that they are ideas behind the times, and not in accordance with the spirit of the age; anti-British, and unworthy of an English country."

These, and similar repeated attacks have suggested to me the thought of bringing before these men the knowledge of what has occurred in England at a very recent date, and show thereby that the views, entertained by Catholics and many Protestants in Manitoba with regard to religious instruction in elementary schools, are not so adverse to English wishes and practice as the adversaries of our schools believe and say. Of course, I have not the presumption of furnishing information to educated men, who devote some attention and time to the cause of education, but I think I will say something new to many who had no chance to consider the facts I am about to recall.

These facts am going to speak of are in connection with:—

1. The Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the working of the elementary education acts in England and Wales.

2. The work accomplished by that commission.

3 Conviction expressed by the commissioners.

4. Some of their conclusions and recommendations.

Of course, I can only touch on the subject in a very light and inadequate manner. The gigantic work of that commission is shewn by the reports, of which a copy lies on my table and is contained in nine large quarto volumes, forming nearly five thousand pages and mostly in double columns. It may seem ridiculous to endeavor to bring within a small compass, adequate information with regard to such a labor, but as the work is inaccessible to most, I hope I may be pardoned in writing a few lines in reference to it.

1. ROYAL COMMISSION.

The 15th of January, 1886, a commission was appointed to enquire into the working of the Elementary Education acts, England and Wales, and that by a royal proclamation which reads as follows:

Victoria R.

Victoria by the grace of God, of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen, defender of the faith. To our right trusty and well beloved councillor, Sir Richard Ashton Cross, Knight Grand Cross of our most honorable Order of the Bath, one of our principal secretaries,

There are given the titles of nobility of official or social position of twenty-one other members of the commission, whose names are repeated below

....and our trusty and well beloved George Shipton, Esq. Greeting.

Whereas we have deemed it expedient that a commission should forthwith issue to enquire into the working of the Elementary Education acts in England and Wales.

Now, know ye, that we, reposing great trust and confidence in your knowledge and ability, have authorized and appointed, and do by presents authorize and appoint you the said Sir Richard Assheton Cross, Henry Edward Manning, Cardinal Archbishop; Dudley Francis Stuart, Earl of Harrowby; Frederick Earl Beauchamp; Frederic, Bishop of London; Charles Bowyer, Baron Norton, Anthony John Mundella, Sir Francis Richard Sandford, Sir John Lubbock, Sir Bernhard Samuelson, James Harrison Rigg, Robert William Dale Robert Gregory, Benjamin Frederick Smith, Thomas Daniel Cox Morse, Charles Henry Alferson, John Gilbert Talbot, Sydney Charles Burton, Thomas Edmund Heller, Bernard Charles Molloy, Samuel Rathbone, Henry Richard and George Shipton, to be our commissioners for the purpose aforesaid. And for the better effecting the purpose of this our commission, we do, by these presents, give and grant unto you, or any six or more of you, full power to call before you such persons as you shall judge likely to afford you any information upon the subject of this our commission; and also to call for, have access to and examine all such books, documents, registers and records, as may afford you the fullest information on the subject, and to inquire of and concerning the premises by all other lawful ways and means whatsoever.

And we do further, by these presents, authorize and empower you, or any six or more of you, to visit and personally inspect such places in our United Kingdom as you may deem expedient for the more effectual carrying out of the purpose aforesaid.

And we do, by these presents, will and ordain that this our commission shall continue in full force and virtue, and that you, our said commissioners, or any six or more of you, may from time to time proceed in the execution thereof and of every matter and thing therein contained, although the same be not continued from time to time by adjournment.

And we do further ordain that you, or any six or more of you, have liberty to report your proceedings under this our commission from time to time if you shall judge it expedient so odo.

And our further will and pleasure is that you do, with as little delay as possible, report to us under your hands or seals, or under the hands and seals of any six or more of you your opinion upon the several matters herein submitted for your consideration.

Given at our Court at Saint James, the fifteenth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-six, in the forty-ninth year of our reign.

By Her Majesty's command,

RICHARD ASHETON CROSS.

On the 10th of March, 1886, Her Majesty appointed the Honorable E. Lyulph Stanley as substitute to the Right Honorable H. J. Mundella, who had resigned his seat upon the commission.

At a later period Mr. Bernard C. Molloy withdrew from the commission. His place was filled by the Duke of Norfolk, who was appointed a commissioner on the 15th of June, 1887.

There is no doubt that the commission is purely English, it emanates from our beloved Queen, and is addressed to some

of her most distinguished subjects, selected on account of their known ability, as well as their love for their country. These twenty-five Commissioners have for the field of their labor, England and Wales; there is nothing of foreign proclivities in these men. Most of them are Protestants and belonging to different denominations; their social position identifies them with all that is honorable and fair: their loyalty to the Crown does not admit of doubt; the trust of their Sovereign imposes to them the duty to meet her views as fully as possible; so we can be assured that such a commission commands respect and attention, not only in England and Wales, but through all the immense domains of Her Majesty.

Let us review what has been accomplished by this commission of Royal appointment, composed of men of distinction and ability, and entrusted with a sacred cause.

2. THE WORK OF THE COMMISSION.

The work of the commission is immense, and will give just cause of surprise to those who believe that the question of education can be fairly and sufficiently discussed in a political speech, or a careless letter to the press, or by a fanatic who thinks it is only necessary to appeal to passions.

I invite those who are not acquainted with the efforts of the said commission to pay some attention to the short analysis I take the liberty of publishing, and which suffices to give a striking proof of the consciousness with which a matter of such great moment as the cause of education is approached in the very heart of the British Empire:

The Royal Commissioners immediately after their appointment set to work with a zeal worthy of themselves and of the trust with which they had been honored by their beloved Sovereign. The inquiry began on the 20th of January, 1886, and lasted until July, 1888. The commissioners themselves state in their reports to Her Majesty, the sources from which they gather their information and say: "After considering the numerous applications received from persons desiring to give evidence before us, we determined to summon representatives of all public bodies who were in any way concerned with the administrative and working of the elementary education acts, and of all classes of persons whom these acts most immediately affect, in addition to such other witnesses as, either from their special knowledge, or from their experience, we thought likely to furnish valuable information. No representative witness, so far as we know, has been precluded from giving evidence before us."

"Mr. Patrick Cumin, Secretary to Your Majesty's Education Department, was the first witness called, whom we heard at great length. We next examined several of Your Majesty's Chief Inspectors of schools; and these witnesses were follow-

ed by representatives of the leading educational societies."

"Thirteen consecutive meetings were exclusively devoted to the evidence of the elementary teachers. In many instances, doubtless, they express the views of a large and influential organization of their professional brethren whose carefully formulated opinions had been, at an early state of our inquiry, placed in our hands."

"The management of Public Elementary schools was the subject which next occupied our attention; nine managers of different kinds of schools appeared before us, and gave us the benefit of their long and varied experiences."

After these the representatives of school boards were called. Our next group of witnesses consisted of representatives of voluntary schools. These gentlemen were followed by an equal number of members of school attendance committees.

"The Welsh bi-lingual difficulty has received our attention.

"Full evidence has also been tendered to us on the subject of the religious instruction given in public elementary schools. Six of the leading advocates of the policy of separating religious from secular instruction in daily elementary schools, five of whom belong to different non-conformist bodies, also appeared before us."

The first report of the commissioners was presented to Her Majesty in 1886, the second in April, 1887, and the third in July, 1887. The three are the minutes of the evidence gathered from the oral witnesses mentioned above. The three reports fill three large quarto volumes in double columns, with an aggregate number of 2,421 pages; to arrive at that result the Royal Commissioners sat for 95 long days; they called 151 witnesses; scrutinized their ideas and views on education by asking 59,809 questions, to which these witnesses gave as many replies. Besides the 95 days devoted to hearing oral testimony, the Commissioners sat 51 other days to complete their work.

They conducted "an important statistical inquiry on an extensive scale; having come to the conclusion that the opinion of the country as a whole on the working of the Education Acts ought to be ascertained, and that valuable documentary information might be obtained from magaziers and teachers of public elementary schools, both voluntary and board, as well as from school boards, we obtained permission to employ a staff for that purpose, under the superintendence of a statistical official. We accordingly issued circulars addressed to managers of voluntary schools, school boards and teachers. A circular was also addressed to the principals of all the existing training colleges."

The knowledge thus acquired was tabulated and was reported to both houses of parliament in 1888 and fills a quarto volume of 487 pages.

Not satisfied with such an accumulation of testimony, the royal commission published further information obtained in answer to inquiries made by another circular addressed to the principals of training colleges in England and Wales in receipt of a government grant; the answers being published in a separate volume. To this may be added 95 papers furnished to the commission and published by their order. The commissioners, to facilitate the study of their wonderful work, caused an index to evidence and also a digest to this evidence to be prepared, the two covering no less than 580 pages, quarto.

Interesting reports, from outside of the mother country, were obtained through Her Majesty's diplomatic agents and are reported by the commissioners in a separate volume of 335 passages. These accounts of the condition of elementary education in certain foreign countries were appreciated by Her Majesty's commission, and widely differs from certain notions recently published. True, the German empire has been consolidated in such a way that, in some respects, it is foremost on the list of nations; but it would be a great mistake to believe that this result has been obtained by the state divorcing from religion or banishing the teaching of religion from its schools. The Royal commission proves otherwise:—

"In Prussia in all the elementary schools the religious instruction is compulsory as well as the other branches of instruction. The religious instruction is given by the teacher, exceptionally by clergymen and by special teachers of religion."

"The religious instruction is obligatory on all the scholars. Also for the religious instruction of the minority provisions are made, partially at the expense of the state; for this purpose means are regularly granted by the government."

"Saxony—Religious instruction is given in the schools of the state. In Protestant schools by the master; in Catholic schools by priests."

"The religious instruction is obligatory on all the scholars. But a minority of Catholic scholars would be taught by a local Catholic priest."

"Wurtemburg—The schools of the state give religious as well as secular instruction; the third part of the school time is devoted to religious instructions. The greatest part of the religious instruction is given by the teacher."

"The religious instruction is not obligatory on all the scholars; the minority may take part in the religious instruction of the majority; but if the parents prefer that their children may not do so they may be excused."

"Bavaria.—In the schools of the State religious education forms part of the curriculum, and is given by the parish priest." "The religious instruction is obligatory on all the scholars."

Inexhaustive other informations are

furnished by the royal commission, not only about the German Empire, but even many other countries, and no doubt it is desirable to see its interesting reports within reach of the men who wish to speak and write about religious instruction and moral training in schools, partly or wholly, supported by the State.

The above analysis, short as it is, suffices to prove that, very likely, there are few among those who talk about education laws, who have taken so much trouble as the royal commission of England to satisfy themselves what direction ought to be given in order to secure the good of individuals, the happiness, of families, and the welfare of nations.

I invite my countrymen, whosoever they may be, to weigh the conviction arrived at by the royal commissioners, after an investigation of such magnitude, that it could be considered as a waste of money, time and intelligence, were not the great cause of education at stake.

3. CONVICTION EXPRESSED.

The conscientious conviction of the royal commission is expressed in their final report in a volume of 500 pages, by itself a most valuable source of information and a kind of synopsis of the whole inquiry conducted with such zeal, patient labor, and wonderful results.

The final report is divided into seven parts.

Part I deals with the existing law.

Part II relates to the existing state of facts.

Part III treats of the machinery for carrying on elementary education.

Part IV. is confined to the education and instruction given in public elementary schools.

Part V. deals with government examination, the parliamentary grant, &c.

Part VI. treats of local educational authorities.

Part VII. consists of a summary of leading conclusions and recommendations.

Only two of the seven parts have a general character, the five others being of more local application. I will quote largely from Part IV., that is to say, from chapter first of that part, on religious and moral training; and which covers from page 112 to 127. The divisions with letters prefixed are mine, and the quotation is taken *passim*, but continues through the chapter.

(a) Paramount Importance of Religious and Moral Training in Schools—"Having been commissioned by Your Majesty to inquire into the working of the Elementary Education acts, we should fail in our duty if we did not review the religious and moral effect of the present system, and of the provisions made by law for enabling and controlling religious as well as secular instruction. While the whole commission is animated by one and the same desire to secure for the children in the public elementary schools the best and most

thorough instruction in secular subjects, suitable to their years, and in harmony with the requirements of their future life, it is also unanimously of opinion that their religious and moral training is a matter of still higher importance alike to the children, the parents and the nation, though the views of its members differ as to the method whereby this object of supreme moment should be attained."

(b.) The parents insists Religious Instruction in schools—"Upon the importance of giving religious as well as moral instruction, as part of the teaching in day public elementary schools, much evidence was brought before us, * * * All the evidence is practically unanimous as to the desire of the parents for the religious and moral training of their children."

(c.) Religious instruction given in English schools. "The answer we have received to circular A 3, testify that out of 385 school boards, 348 give daily religious instruction, and 123 have religious examinations; and out of 3,496 teachers of departments who have sent in replies to circular D, 3,161 say that they give daily religious instruction, and 2,372 say examinations in religious knowledge are held annually.

(d.) Sunday school and home religious instructions deficient.—"We must add that though we highly value the influence of Sunday schools, it is admitted that many scholars in elementary schools do not either attend them or any place of worship, and that their parents are often too ignorant or too indifferent to give their children any religious instruction. Such children, therefore, are entirely dependent upon instruction in the day schools, for any knowledge of the scriptural truths which ought to be the common heritage of all the people in a Christian country. We hope that the religious and moral training in all board schools may be raised to the high standard which has been attained already in many of them, and that it will be made clear that the state, while scrupulously maintaining its provisions for safe-guarding the rights of conscience, does not wish to discourage any of the managers, teachers, and members of school boards, connected with any of the elementary schools of the country who are endeavoring to bring up their children in love and obedience to God."

(e.) Inspection of religious instruction recommended.—"The need for annual inspection of religious instruction in board schools corresponding to that made by the diocesan inspector in church schools, in presence, especially of the strong competition to which religious instruction is exposed by the restriction of the government examination to secular subjects, has been recognized in evidence before us by the representatives of many important school boards; and we gather that a movement is extending itself for securing that an annual examination should be held with a view to test the efficiency of the scriptural instruction."

(f.) Grant to Christian schools not an endowment to religious education.—“We cannot therefore, concur in the view that the state may be constructively regarded as endowing religious education when under these conditions it pays annual grants for secular instruction in aid of voluntary local effort to schools in which religious instruction forms part of the programme.”

(g.) Prohibition of religious teaching an injury to parents' conscientious feelings.—“But while we are most anxious that conscientious objections of parents to religious teaching and observances, in the case of their children, should be most strictly respected, and that no child should, under any circumstances, receive any such training contrary to a parent's wishes, we feel bound to state that a parent's conscientious feeling may be equally injured, and should be equally respected and provided for, in the case where he is compelled by law to send his child, for all his school time, to a school where he can receive no religious teaching.

“This grave injury to conscience, may easily now arise in the case, where a single board or voluntary school suffices for the whole school supply of a district, or where only one school is within a reasonable distance of a man's home. In that school, as we have seen it, at this moment the case, with a certain number of voluntary and board schools, the Bible may not be read or taught, and there may be no religious teaching.”

(h.) Proposed to prohibit religious instructions in schools repudiated.—“The views of those who would remove from day elementary schools, all religious teaching and observance have received our attentive consideration.”

“Those who hold this view in favor of purely secular schools did not shrink from urging before us, through the witnesses who represented them, that the state should take the extreme step of prohibiting religious instruction in public elementary schools.”

“Even those witnesses however, who strenuously advocated the secularisation of public elementary education, most emphatically declared that they regarded religion as the true basis of education, and only contented for its exclusion from the day school in the belief that it could be provided in some other and better way.”

“In questions of this character it is impossible to have negative provisions which have not also a positive side. Thus, for children to attend day schools in which no religious teaching was given would, in the opinion of those who think that the daily lessons should be accompanied with religious teaching, be practically leading them to undervalue the importance of religion. They would hold that the impression left upon the children's minds would be that religion was a matter of inferior moment, at all events to that secular teaching which they were acquiring day by day.”

“In support of the contention that religious instruction should be excluded from the day school, it was further urged by Dr. Crosskey that it makes an undesirable tax on the teacher's energies. But, on the other hand, we have had brought before us trustworthy testimony, some of it from teachers themselves, that, as a body, they would consider it a great loss if they were debarred from giving Bible lessons to their scholars. Moreover, the religious instruction given by teachers, we have been told by the Rev. J. Duncan, greatly increases the moral influence of the teacher. The moral character of teachers themselves. Archdeacon Norris, formerly Her Majesty's inspector of schools in various populous counties, thinks, would suffer if they were forbidden to impart religious instruction, add finally, against the attempt, on this or any other ground, to prohibit teachers from giving moral and religious instruction in their schools, Mr. Cumin, secretary of the committee of council on education, emphatically protests. He believes that many excellent teachers would absolutely refuse to be restricted in their teaching to secular subjects.”

“It was urged that religion was discredited by being included in a programme consisting chiefly of secular subjects.”

“But we have no evidence tending to show that these results actually occur, and it can hardly be supposed that if such were found to be practically the result, religious bodies and school boards would still continue to make such great efforts as we find they now do in order to maintain an efficient system of religious instruction in the schools for which they are responsible. On the other hand, we have positive evidence that children who have received religious teaching in the day school are better prepared to profit by Sunday school teaching and to become themselves teachers in Sunday schools.”

“But were there more weight due than we have been able to attach to these and other like reasons for prohibiting elementary teachers from giving religious instruction in the day school, there are positive arguments of great value in favor of the principle of religious instruction being given by the teachers. We have spoken of the evidence tending to show that teachers, as a body, would strongly oppose its removal out of their hands. Even more to be considered, in our judgment, are the wishes of the parents.”

“A large body of witnesses, consisting among others of Her Majesty's inspectors, teachers and managers, speaking both for board and voluntary schools, deposed before us to the great value which the parents generally set on the religious instruction given to their children in the day school.”

“We are convinced that if the state were to secularise elementary education, it would be in violation of the wishes of the parents, whose views in such a matter are, we think, entitled to the first consideration. * * *

"Many other children would have no other opportunity of being taught the elementary doctrines of Christianity, as they do not attend Sunday schools, and their parents, in the opinion of a number of witnesses, are quite unable to teach them.

(i) No efficient substitute for the system of utilizing school staff and the hours of school attendance for religious instruction.

"But those who contemplate this change and advocate the exclusion of religious teaching from all public elementary schools state that they look to supply the void thus created by other and, as they think, by better means. It is not asserted by them with much confidence that the duty of educating children religiously can be wholly left to their parents. Abundant evidence from all classes of witnesses is before us, tending to show that many parents are unable to undertake this branch of their children's education, even if they were willing, and that if it were left to them it would be omitted.

"We concur with those witnesses who gave it as their opinion that without the ordinary school staff it would be impossible to give efficient religious instruction on any large scale, to large bodies of children. The clerk of the school board of Liverpool expressed his conviction that ministers of all denominations would be quite inadequate to deal with the instruction of that vast and growing population, and that to forbid religious instruction during the regular hours of school would be most disastrous. * * *

"But after hearing all that could be said for it, we cannot recommend the plan thus suggested of religious instruction to be given by voluntary teachers, on the school premises, out of school hours, for the success of which, even those most anxious to try the experiment will not be answerable. It would, in our opinion, be no efficient substitute for the existing system of utilizing the school staff and the hours of school attendance for this purpose, a system which has taken deep root in the country, and appears to give general satisfaction to parents."

(j.) Greater support should be given by the state to the moral element of training in English schools.

"As to the moral training given in the schools, the opportunities permitted to Her Majesty's inspectors of inquiring into the efficiency of moral training have been under the existing arrangements necessarily limited."

"We are strongly of opinion that much greater support should be given by the state to the moral element of training in our schools. * * * We recommend therefore that general fundamental and fixed instructions should be laid down as to moral training, making it an essential condition of the efficiency of a public elementary school."

"And as we have found with regret that in recent years this branch of the inspec-

tor's duty has not received the attention it deserved, we therefore think it necessary to make it a distinct recommendation that it should be considered the first duty of Her Majesty's inspectors to inquire into and report upon the moral training."

"After hearing the arguments for a wholly secular education, we have come to the following conclusions:

"(1.) That it is of the highest importance that all children should receive religious and moral training. (2.) That the evidence does not warrant the conclusion that such religious and moral training can be amply provided, otherwise than through the medium of elementary schools. (3.) That in schools of a denominational character, to which parents are compelled to send their children, the parents have a right to require an operative conscience clause, so that care be taken that the children shall not suffer in any way in consequence of their taking advantage of the conscience clause. (4.) That inasmuch as parents are compelled to send their children to school it is just and desirable that, as far as possible, they should be enabled to send them to a school, suitable to their religious connections or preferences. (5.) We are also of opinion that it is of the highest importance that the teachers who are charged with the moral training of the scholars should continue to take part in the religious instruction. We should regard any separation of the teacher from the religious teaching of the school, as injurious to the moral and secular training of the scholars."

May I respectfully ask those who might read the above quotations to pause over the and say if really they could consider as unprogressive, or unreasonable, or adverse to the enlightenment of the growing generation, the men who conscientiously entertain the same views as the Royal Commission with regard to religious instruction in the elementary schools.

4.—CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION.

Part VII. of the final report consists exclusively of a summary of leading conclusions and recommendations. It seems that the convictions expressed and the conclusions arrived at, as quoted above from Part IV. of the report, could be considered as sufficient recommendation on the part of the commission. The distinguished commissioners judged otherwise, and wishing to see their views carried into effect, they thought proper to have Part VII. of their report, exclusively filled up with their conclusions and recommendations. Some are mere repetitions of what had been said before; nevertheless, the commissioners attached such importance to them that they did not shrink from repeating them again.

They brought the same conclusions and recommendations from number 1 to 198. I will select out of them thirty numbers

which have a more direct relation with certain objections raised against our school laws and their application. The numbers, the reader will see, do not all follow one another, but each one is quoted fully. The whole of the 198 numbers can be found in the final report from page 208 to page 223. Here are my quotations:

"(24) That in framing regulations for fixing the qualifications required of teachers, it will be desirable to bear in mind that there are some with a natural aptitude and love for teaching, who have not received a college training, but who could not be excluded from the profession without a loss to our schools."

"(25) That the employment of women of superior social position and general culture as teachers has a refining and excellent effect upon schools."

"(33) That, to encourage managers of voluntary schools as well as school boards to extend the advantages of central class teaching to their pupil-teachers, extra grants should be offered to those managers or boards who successfully adopt that course."

"(44) That whilst recommending that facilities should be afforded in one or other of the ways suggested for the establishment of day training colleges, we think that no portion of the cost of establishing or maintaining new day training colleges should fall upon the rates."

"(45) That, in their proposals, the following points will require serious attention of parliament."

"(1) The question of security for the religious and moral instruction of those who are to be trained as teachers."

"(57) That while we desire to secure for the children in the public elementary schools the best and most thorough instruction in secular subjects, suitable to their years and in harmony with the requirements of their future life, we are also unanimously of opinion that their religious and moral training is a matter of still higher importance, alike to the children, the parents and the nation."

"(58.) That there can be no doubt, from the statement of the witnesses, whether favorable or hostile to teaching religion in schools, and from the testimony afforded by the action of both school boards and voluntary schools, as to the opinion of the country generally on the subject of religious and moral training in day schools, and that all the evidence is practically unanimous as to the desire of the parents for the religious and moral training of their children."

"(59.) That to secularise elementary education would be a violation of the wishes of parents, whose views in such a matter are, we think, entitled to the first consideration."

"(60.) That the only safe foundation on which to construct a theory of morals, or to secure high moral conduct, is the religion which our Lord Jesus Christ has taught the world. That as we look to the Bible for instruction concerning morals,

and take its words for the declaration of what is morality, so we look to the same inspired source for the sanctions by which men may be led to practice what is there taught, and for instruction concerning the helps by which they may be enabled to do what they have learned to be right."

"(61.) That the evidence does not warrant the conclusion that religious and moral training can be amply provided otherwise than through the medium of elementary schools.

"(62.) That, in the case of a considerable number of children, if they do not receive religious instruction and training from the teachers in the public elementary schools, they will receive none, and that this would be a matter of the gravest concern to the state."

"(63.) That all registers should be marked before the religious teaching and observances begin, scrupulous care being taken, in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Education Act to provide for the case of children whose parents object to such teaching and observances."

"(64.) That it is of the highest importance that the teachers who are charged with the moral training of the scholars should continue to take part in the religious instruction, and that any separation of the teacher from the religious teaching of the school would be very injurious to the moral and secular training of the scholars."

"(65.) That we cannot recommend the plan which has been suggested of religious instruction to be given by voluntary teachers on the school premises out of school hours. That such a plan would be no efficient substitute for the existing system of utilizing the school staff and the house of school attendance for this purpose, a system which has taken deep root in the country; and appears to give general satisfaction to the parents."

"(66.) That the state cannot be constructively regarded as endowing religious education, when, under the conditions of the act of 1870, it pays annual grants in aid of voluntary local effort for secular instruction in schools, in which religious instruction forms part of the programme."

"(67) That inasmuch as parents are compelled to send their children to school, it is just and desirable that, as far as possible, they should be enabled to send them to a school suitable to their religious convictions or preferences."

"(70) That in schools of a denominational character to which parents are compelled to send their children, the parents have a right to require an operative conscience clause, and that care be taken that the children shall not suffer in any way in consequence of their taking advantage of the conscience clause."

"(71) That the absence of any substantiated case of complaint and the general drift of the evidence convince us that the

conscience clause is carefully observed both by teachers and managers."

"(72) That we recognise, nevertheless, the importance of removing, if possible, any suspicion of unfair play or undue influence in the administration of the conscience clause from the minds of those who entertain such impressions. And any further precautions which might tend in that direction, without compromising still higher interests, are deserving of the most careful consideration."

"(73) That, greatly as the estimate of the value of the religious instruction given in board schools varies with the standpoint from which it is regarded, there is good ground for concluding that where care is bestowed on the organization of such instruction, and sufficient time is allowed for imparting it, it is of a nature to affect the conscience and influence the conduct of the children of whose daily training it forms a part. That it is much to be hoped that the religious and moral training in all elementary schools may be raised to the high standard which has been already reached in many of them."

"(74) That exactly the same facilities to hold annual examinations of their schools in religious knowledge should be given by law to school boards as are now allowed under section 76 of the act of 1870 to the managers of voluntary schools."

"(75.) That increased support should be given by the State to the moral element of training in our schools, almost the only reference to the importance of such matters made by the state being that which is made in the Code under the head of discipline."

"(76.) That general, fundamental and fixed instructions to Her Majesty's inspectors should be laid down as to moral training, making it an essential condition of the efficiency of a public elementary school, that its teachings should comprise such matters as instruction in duty and reverence to parents, honor and truthfulness in word and act, honesty, consideration and respect for others, obedience, cleanliness, good manners, purity, temperance, duty to country, the discouragement of bad language, and the like."

"(77.) That it should be the first duty of Her Majesty's inspectors to inquire into and report upon the moral training and condition of the schools, under the various heads set forth, and to impress upon the managers, teachers, and children the primary importance of this essential element of all education.

"(86.) That we are opposed to the introduction of a set of official government text books; but that, with the view of indicating to managers and teachers the range of study intended to be covered by the requirements of the code, a more or less extended programme should be published for each subject, similar to those adopted in the science and art directory, with a view of showing within what limits the official examinations should be confined; and also, that in the syllabuses

for pupil-teachers's definitions in programmes of studies, which leave no doubt as to their interpretation, are specially required."

"(90.) That the provision of the code, which requires that if only one class subject is taken, it must be 'English,' should be repealed."

"(108.) "That in Wales, permission should be given to take up the Welsh language as a specific subject; to adopt an optional scheme to take the place of English as a class subject, founded on the principle of substituting a graduated system of translation from Welsh to English, for the present requirements in English grammar; to teach Welsh along with English as a class subject; and to include Welsh among the languages in which candidates for Queen's scholarships and for certificates of merit may be examined."

"(109.) "That the introduction of elaborate apparatus for gymnastic exercises into playgrounds is not to be recommended.

"(138.) That the State should continue to recognize voluntary and board schools as together forming the national provision for elementary education; and that both ought to continue to participate in equal conditions in the parliamentary grant."

I need not repeat that the commission, whose work I have so highly reviewed, is entirely English, and that its conclusion should not be treated lightly, at least by those who constantly make an appeal to their British origin or British proclivities. For my part, I will not hesitate to say that I felt a particular pleasure in ascertaining once more that my views on religious instruction in the schools, far from being adverse to those entertained in the Mother Country, are in perfect harmony with them.

In my estimation, the school is the church of the children, and there only, in many instances, could be realized the words of the best friend of children when He said : "Suffer little children to come unto me." Yes, christian parents, suffer your little ones to go to Christ through the religious and moral training they ought to receive in their respective elementary schools. For the "Lord is a God of all knowledge," and that which brings children nearer to God cannot be an impediment to the acquiring of true and useful knowledge. These are the cherished ideas of my life; study, experience and observation, and the testimony of the most illustrious men of all ages and countries, have confirmed me in these ideas and, in reality, they are, as quoted above, the conclusion arrived at by the Royal Commission appointed by Our Beloved Queen to inquire into the working of the elementary education acts of England and Wales.

Thanking you for granting me the space in your journal,

I remain,

Your Obedient Servant,
† Alex., Arch. of St. Boniface. O.M.I.
St. Boniface, 10th August, 1889.

SEPARATE SCHOOLS.

Archbishop Tache Answers Some Statements Against Catholic Schools.

To the Editor of the Free Press.

SIR.—What has appeared in the press lately is an undoubted proof that there is a desire to strike a fatal blow at the Catholic schools of Manitoba. The question is so important that, in spite of many other engrossing occupations, I would say something in reply. The very importance of the matter demands its discussion to be conducted in a calm and impartial manner. Unfortunately the adversaries of the Catholic schools do not always exhibit that fairness which is undoubtedly required in a question of such moment. The law is spoken of without being cited, and its sense is distorted in order to make it obnoxious. Many statistics are invoked, and though, in many instances, quite opposed to the facts, they are presented as conclusive. Appeals to the passions are freely made, promises of a reduction in taxation are held out as a bait, and all that in order to create the impression that if the Catholics are made to pay more for the education of their children, that the burden of the Protestant will be reduced.

Fair minded people may be glad to hear something on the Catholic side of the question, so as to enable them to judge if the actual laws are injurious to some part of our population, and if there is a reasonable cause to alter them in such a way that they will become a standing injury to conscientious convictions of Catholics. I have no wish to accuse anyone, my sole aim is to engage in a sacred duty imposed upon me by my position itself. I have no idea of exhausting the subject in the following remarks. I may have, and as others have, to come forward again to defend our rights. To-day I merely intend to contradict certain assertions which have come to my knowledge, through the newspapers. I propose dividing my observations into four different parts.

1—SOURCES OF INCOME FOR THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF MANITOBA.

The actual law shows great impartiality and great respect for the equal rights of the population of the Province, in the way that its two sections can obtain the benefits granted by the law. Our statutes point out three sources of income for the common schools of the Province.

Legislative grant.—The first resource of the school's income is the legislative

grant, and this is the way the law provides for its distribution between Protestants and Catholics.

Section 83.—“The school trustees in each school district, shall in each year, cause to be made a census of the children in such school district from the age of five years to the age of fifteen, both inclusive. And such census after being certified by the secretary-treasurer of the school district under oath . . . shall be presented to the proper superintendent, whose duty it shall be to forward same to the Provincial Secretary.”

Section 84.—“The sum appropriated by the Legislature for common school purposes shall be divided between the Protestant and Roman Catholic sections of the Board of Education, in proportion to the number of children . . . as shown in the census returns.” The division is made by two members of the Government. Such is the law, it recognizes that the grant for education is for the benefit of the school population of the province; it acknowledges that each child has an equal right, and provides for each child receiving an equal share of the public money granted for educational purposes. There cannot be surely a mode of apportionment more just, more equitable and more in conformity with equal rights than the basis recognized by our legislation. This year every child on the census received a little more than \$5 each, and as long as one does not receive more than another there can be no injustice—the Protestant cannot complain, and the Catholics ought to be satisfied, all the children, are on a perfectly equal footing; the law does not favor one more than another, and could not without manifest injustice take from the children of one section to give to the children of the other.

It may occur, and does occur, that in isolated settlements there are greater difficulties to support the schools, but this is equally the case for Catholics as for Protestants. It is for the interested parties and their respective sections of the board to remedy the difficulties as far possible, while the law fixing the appointment of public money for the whole province cannot rest on a better basis than the one on which it now stands.

(b) Assessments.—The second source of income for the schools is the result of the taxes levied on the ratepayers, Protest-

2

ants or Catholics, and that in conformity with the decision of the board of school trustees respectively. Every other request of the law having been complied with, the trustees apply to the municipal authorities to secure the amount they think necessary for the working of the schools under their care. The law is very explicit in guarding the school and municipal authorities against the danger of levying taxes from ratepayers for the benefit of a school which is not under the control of their section. The following quotation is clear enough to show the spirit of the law and to remove all misapprehension.

In clause 30th, I read: "In no case shall a Protestant ratepayer be obliged to pay for a Catholic school, or a Catholic ratepayer for a Protestant school." The provision of the law is perfectly clear and intelligible, and how is it possible that men who ought to be serious, can say or write, "The Protestants of this country have been directly taxed to educate the children of Catholics." "No, such is not the case, the Protestants are taxed for the education of their own children and the Catholics the same for theirs. The adversaries of Catholic schools must rely to a great extent on prejudice, or ignorance, when arguing on affirmations so contrary to law and practice. I then say that the second source of revenue for the support of elementary schools as directed by the law secures equal rights to Protestants and Catholics, without any privilege in favor of one over the other.

(c) Taxes from incorporate bodies.—The third source of income is from the taxation imposed on associated or incorporated companies. This point merits particular attention. The companies, whose title is that of individuals, are treated by the law as if they were individuals, so that if John & Co. are Protestants their taxation goes to the Protestant schools, but if they are Catholic the Catholic schools get the benefit. That is perfectly clear in the law. "Religious, benevolent, or educational incorporations, shall pay their respective assessments to the schools of their respective denominations," as provided in clause 30, and that, even when no individual name is known or given.

With regard to ordinary and mercantile corporations, clause 28 says: "The corporations situated in a locality where different school districts are established . . . shall be assessed only for the school district of the majority; yet out of such assessment the council of the local municipality, city or town shall give the school district of the minority a part of such assessment, in proportion to the number of children of school age." This disposition of the law has its inconveniences as well as its advantages when we consider such a place or company apart, but it is impossible to find it unjust when

it is examined in relation to the whole Province and to all its inhabitants.

Companies are formed undeniably to benefit pecuniarily their shareholders; such shareholders do not rely exclusively on portion of the community to secure business. They look up to the whole population and never refuse customers because they are Catholics, why then should not Catholics share with the Protestants out of the taxes of such corporation who desire their profits from both sections? A division seems most just. But how should the taxes be divided, except according to population? But the taxes are in favor of the school population. Therefore it has seemed natural to the legislators who framed the school act of Manitoba to take the two sections of the school population as the basis of the division of the money levied on companies who have no other character than that of mercantile institution. To attribute secret motives to the legislators who framed the school law is certainly, to say the least, not an act of good taste. To justify a change in the law, an appeal is now made to the cupidity of the tax-payers. The desire to save money may induce many to swallow the bait, but men who consider cautiously and fairly the actual disposition of the law cannot say that an unjust preference is secured by anyone. Human laws, as humanity itself, are never perfect; it is easy to criticize or even to destroy; but it is always a difficult task to build up and endeavor to make perfect. The study of the provisions of the law for elementary schools convince me more and more that the moment that our schools are divided between Catholics and Protestants, it is difficult, if not impossible, to find an arrangement that will safeguard in a more complete manner than the actual law, the equal rights of the two sections of our population.

2—MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOLS.

I have examined in the preceding article the sources of income to be used for elementary education in Manitoba, and I have pointed out the fairness of the law in safe-guarding the equal rights of the children of the country. I will now examine the management of the schools and see how our actual school laws stand in that same respect. Our schools are managed by the board of education, by the superintendents, by the trustees and by the teachers; let us view how far this to secure equal rights to the Protestants and Catholics.

(a) The Board of Education—There is in the general board of education a Protestant section entirely composed of Protestants; that section has "under its control and management the Protestant schools of the province; the power of making such regulations as may be deemed fit for their general government and discipline; to arrange for the proper examination, grading and li-

censing of its teachers; to select all the books, maps and globes to be used; to appoint inspectors, etc., etc." The general management of the Protestant schools is then entirely in the hands of Protestants. The part of the Government grants, apportioned to Protestant children, is also in the hands of the Protestant section of the board for the partition imposed by the requirements of their section and according to law, for the greater benefit of the Protestant schools. Catholics have nothing to do, and do not wish to have anything to do, with Protestant schools, they see them with pleasure in full enjoyment of their legitimate rights, but at the same time the same Catholics claim the benefit of enjoying similar rights, and the law guarantees what they desire. by placing the Catholic schools under the control of the Catholic section of the board of education with exactly the same power and responsibilities. The members of the Protestant section, we are glad to say, deserve the confidence of their co-religionists and outside of their personal worth, they are earnest in the cause of education, they are faithful to their trust and everybody must be satisfied that they neglect nothing that can be done to promote the success of the schools under their control. Several of them are well versed in the theory and practice of education and none will ever consent to a sacrifice of Protestant interests in their schools. It is true that the Catholics enjoy a parallel advantage, but as they have an equal right to it we fail to see why they should be deprived of that enjoyment.

(b) The Superintendents.—There is a Protestant superintendent of education and a Catholic, both appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council and selected respectively out of the members of the Protestant and Catholic sections of the board of education. The superintendents "have, as the executive officers of the board of education, the general supervision and direction of the schools of their sections. It is for each of them to fill a requisition to the government for all payments authorized by his section of the board of education," and many other duties fully expressed in the law. Who could imagine that the Protestant superintendent would tolerate any encroachment on the part of the Catholics against the rights of the Protestant schools? Each superintendent has charge of the accounts of his section, and they all must pass through his hands. He reports them to his section and the requisitions for payments are made accordingly, and one may be pretty certain that not one cent of the government grant for Protestant schools will be paid to the Catholic schools. The Catholic superintendent will undoubtedly do the same and the equal rights of the two sections of the population are thus well protected and safe-guarded against any

attempt aiming at their violation. Is not this all fair and right?

(c.) School trustees.—Each school is under the direct management of school trustees. Consequently all the Protestant schools are immediately managed by a school board elected by Protestants and whose members are all Protestant as the law states, "No person shall be eligible to be elected or to serve as a school trustee who is not a resident ratepayer of the district or ward which he proposes to represent." We have seen that Protestants alone can be assessed for the support of Protestant schools, consequently Protestants alone are ratepayers of their school district and alone are eligible. The position of Catholics with their schools is the same and the rights are equal. To the trustees who form a corporation, belongs all the school property of the district, the apportionment to their school of the government grant, and the moneys derived from the taxes are under the control of the trustees; as far as each school is concerned, it is pretty evident that the Protestant trustees will not allow Catholics to share in those moneys and vice versa.

(d) Teachers.—The teachers in the Protestant schools are selected by trustees. They must have been previously recognized by the Protestant section of the board of education, they must have given proof of their fitness for the position, and it is evident that their action, in the care of the children, must be in accordance with Protestants ideas, with Protestant interests, and give full securities to the parents. The Catholics have the same advantages, but nothing beyond; and parents, as a general rule, are exceedingly anxious as to the religious kind of training that is given to their children, it is certain that nothing in that direction can satisfy them except by giving the children teachers of their own choice. Let, then, Protestant and Catholic schools be taught respectively as they are, and it is the only practical way to give equal rights to the whole population and to meet the views of the parents, whose legitimate claims cannot be disregarded.

3. SOME REASONS WHY THE ASSESSMENT IS DIFFERENT BETWEEN CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT SCHOOL DISTRICTS.

There are many reasons to explain the difference which exists in the expenses of the schools under the control of the two sections of the board of education, and these reasons must be considered in the gathering of statistics, to give a full and adequate idea of the standing of the two sections. Statistics are very good, but to be sure guide they must be complete; a man may be lame on account of an unsound leg, but he would still be more lame with a beautifully shaped leg, if he has but the one; just the same with statistics, they are lame if they rest on unsound and

false figures. They would equally be unexact if based only on one part of the information they are supposed to give. Therefore, I think proper to bring before the public some information which is ignored, or at least not alluded to in the controversy which is going on with regard to our school system.

(a) Debts. The different school boards have equal rights to incur debts, and they are perfectly justifiable to do so if such is the wish of the ratepayers who elect them, and if they act in accordance with the provisions of the law. But they must be ready to bear the consequences of such, and after they have run deeply into debt it is surely perfectly unfair to complain that they have heavier assessment, as they have to provide for interest and sinking funds. Now, the Protestant school boards have decided to borrow large sums of money, and, if I am not wrongly informed, the aggregate obligations in that respect amount to about half a million of dollars. Observe, please, I do not blame the Protestants of the country for having shown, to that extent, their anxiety to secure, at once, large school accommodation, etc.; that was their concern as it is their right, and I have not the remotest idea of even passing a remark on their conduct, but the debt is incurred, it is incurred not for Catholics, who have not the remotest reason to share in the benefits acquired by the borrowed money. Having no right to the benefit, they may be pardoned to decline the obligation of paying for the same, or even the odium derived from the comparison between their small liabilities and that of their fellow-citizens.

The aggregate amount of debts incurred by all the Catholic school district of the province does not reach \$6,000. Consequently the taxes to pay the interest and provide for sinking funds is insignificant compared with that accepted by the Protestant population, through their representatives in their different school boards.

The whole debt for Catholic purposes being only one-eightieth part of the amount due by Protestant schools, no wonder that the taxation is entirely disproportionate; but why is not this bit of knowledge recorded along side of the figures given by opponents to Catholic schools? Such figures being incomplete and entirely one-sided, can convey but a very inadequate idea of the real state of things.

(b) Help to save expenses to school districts. Before entering on this topic I毫不犹豫地 admit that I may be ignorant of facts which would, naturally, change what I am going to say. If such be the case I will be thankful for being furnished with accounts referring to the subject, and will be the first to acknowledge any error and to correct it.

I judge from what I see and hear travelling through the country, and any error,

if there be any, comes from the fact that I avoid scrutinizing in the carrying out of Protestant schools. I am under the impression that all the expenses with regard to schools and school accommodations are sustained by ratepayers among Protestants. If I am not mistaken, the beautiful building, valuable grounds adapted to school purposes in Winnipeg, Brandon, and elsewhere, not only belong to school boards, but have been secured to the expense of the ratepayers, and consequently have contributed largely to increase school taxation among Protestants. Should things be as I think they are, I repeat that I find no fault in the system, but nevertheless it is another explanation, taking the province as a whole, of the difference of school taxation, between the Catholic and Protestant populations.

The Catholic school districts besides what they possess and have paid for, enjoy the advantage of school accommodations for a value of over one hundred thousand dollars, of which the ratepayers have not furnished one single cent, and this undoubtedly, is another fair explanation why their taxation is reduced to a certain degree, and this ought to have been mentioned along with figures given, if intended to convey a complete idea of the condition of our schools.

(c) Savings with regard to teachers. I naturally admit that high price is one of the ways to secure the services of well qualified persons for teaching, and it seems to be the only resource at the command of our Protestant friends. Over and aside of this ordinary way of securing good teachers, the Catholics have an advantage that they highly appreciate, and which is not entirely despised by Protestants of standing and enlightenment. The advantage I allude to is the one secured by the valuable services of persons, who do not teach for the sake of money or for making a living out of it, but who do teach as a sacred duty towards God and society, and who teach either for nothing or for the small amount barely giving them food and clothing.

This consideration goes a good way against taxation, and is another factor of the difference which exists between the two sections of our school system. Any person will admit that this does no harm to Protestants while it does a great deal of good to Catholics. The raising of the salary of these teachers would undoubtedly increase the taxation among the Catholics, but would in no way diminish that of the Protestants, and the cause of education would gain nothing by it.

Ideas on this topic are so erroneous among some people that saving expenses to ratepayers with regard to teachers, means poor teaching. Such men seem to ignore completely that there were, there are and there will be thousands and thousands of the very best qualified teachers who never received and will never receive one dollar from any government

grant or any assessment levied on rate-payers.

I will examine elsewhere some of the ideas suggested by what has just been above stated; but it is undeniable that as far as money is concerned the teachers who ask less are a saving resource to the ratepayers, and to tabulate complete statistics, the saving thus effected ought to be taken into consideration; and while raising a cry among the Protestants because of their assessment with regard to school, fairness would require to state all the reasons why it is so.

(d.) Collegiate Schools.—It must be born in mind that all the monies spent by the trustees of the Catholic schools are exclusively spent for elementary schools. Higher education among Catholics is provided otherwise than by legislative grant or assessment levied on the ratepayers. Catholic trustees have not to provide for collegiate or intermediate departments. It is not necessary to tell any person versed in the matter that this by itself goes a good way to explain why a larger portion of the legislative money, and a smaller assessment, are shared in by the Catholic schools, compared with the Protestants, who having to provide for collegiate or intermediate schools, out of the same fund, receive less and give more for their purely elementary schools.

But why do not Catholics do as Protestants? To this I will simply answer: Why do not Protestants do as Catholics?

Our friends wish to have collegiate and intermediate departments supported out of the legislative grant and assessment; very well, let them satisfy themselves, but we may ask them not to grumble against others, after having chosen themselves to spend a part of their school income that way.

Catholics have the same right to act, and they do act otherwise, and as they chose for themselves and thereby do no harm to others, I think they could be let alone. Human affairs ought not to be considered under one aspect only; men can act in a different manner from others and act as wisely. Business men have different methods, and with a variety of proceedings may arrive at the same general result. Uniformity and complete similitude do not always develop all the faculties, contrast does not prevent harmony, emulation promotes success more than monopoly.

(e) Number of Schools.—It is evident that the number of schools is one of the reasons why the assessment is largely different. The number of schools is not a necessary result of the system of education in itself, but rather of incidental circumstances. The Protestant section has under its control 103 schools, with a school population of less than 15, while the Catholic section have but 4 schools in such circumstances. 104 Protestant schools have a school population from 15 to 20 children each, while the Catholics have only 9

with a similar population. The moment there is such disproportion in the number of even lesser schools, it is natural that a large assessment be the result; but supposing that the Catholics multiply their schools and that they would bring their number to be to the Protestant schools exactly the proportion to that of the children of the two sections.. That will in no way alter the taxation of Protestants. Therefore I cannot see why they should be excited against the Catholic schools, as if really Catholics were helping themselves out of their pockets. But are not Catholics increasing the number of their schools ? They are, but not with the same rapidity as Protestants do and that for two reasons quite different one from the other, they are numerous in their settled districts and too few when scattered through the country. In many instances the Catholic settlers could not secure a reasonable attendance, and then they do not care to establish a school district.

Many new Catholic settlers would rather go in a settled part of the country and their presence, while increasing the school population of existing districts, does not necessitate the erection of new ones. There is, in this respect, as in many others, great difference between the views of the two sections of the population, each one believing in the superiority of its own choice. People coming from Ontario believe in square blocks near to or far from any neighbor, they come for farming and large areas is what they chiefly consider, and to obtain that object, they are ready to sacrifice many other considerations, while others are guided by certain social considerations, they like close neighbors, they dread isolation, they would rather be near a church and consequently near a school, they find the prairie too mild, isolation too lonesome, and if they have a little money in their pockets, they would rather pay for a piece of land in an old settlement or any established part of the country, rather than to take a homestead in an unoccupied or thinly settled part. There are exceptions, the exceptions constitute the isolated population unable to form school districts, while the main body of the new comers merely increase the attendance in already formed school districts.

All this may be bad to Catholics and good to Protestants, it is a matter of taste and choice, but it is in no way the result of the school law, nor could it be materially altered by school regulations.

From the tenure of this article it is obvious that debts are one great cause of the disproportion in taxation, although nobody can think of forcing the Catholics to pay the debt of others.

Help gratuitously given to elementary Catholic schools in the shape of school accommodation, etc., has undoubtedly alleviated of as much, the burden of the

Catholic ratepayers, but our friends have no idea, I am sure, of taking that advantage from us. The self-denial of many Catholic school teachers turned to the benefit of Catholic ratepayers who are fully determined to continue to enjoy the same privilege. Influx of population will soon increase the number of Catholic schools; and as far as I can see, I may say that in a near future they will be in a fair proportion with others, so there is no need of fearing that the Catholics will pay too little, when especially they do not ask others to pay for them.

OBJECTIONS ANSWERED.

(a) "Facts from the census," says one of the newspapers, "ought to satisfy any reasonable mind of the absurdity of further tolerating separate or denominational schools." Is that so? Is the Catholic minority of Manitoba so "insignificant" as to be treated that way? To the man who wrote this I will ask: Do you think that the Protestant minority of Quebec is so small that the Catholic majority could rightly and fairly frame a system of schools according to their own views in the matter, and force it upon the said Protestant minority? You know what would be the result through the whole Dominion and all Protestant countries, if the majority of Quebec would attempt to deprive the Protestant minority of their acquired rights with regard to the education of their children. The Catholics of Quebec, except forced to it, as a measure of retaliation, will never think or dream of such an injustice, while we plainly see that too many Protestants of Manitoba do not shrink from the responsibility of doing such an injurious and unconstitutional wrong to the Catholic minority of the Prairie Province. You make an appeal to the census, but like some other statistics, your appeal is lame and one sided. You acknowledge that the Catholic population is 14,651, you acknowledge also that the balance of the population of the province, exclusive of the Indians, is 88,325. Well, these two fractions of our population gives the Catholic element a larger proportion than that of the Protestants of Quebec compared with the Catholic portion of the same province. Yes, the Catholic minority of Manitoba is in proportion, larger than the Protestant minority of the Province of Quebec, and that even in counting among the non-Catholics of the two provinces, the Jews, those without religion, or without any given religion.

Look in the census of the Dominion for 1881 and you will easily establish the ratio. The Catholics of Quebec numbered 1,170,718, while the non-Catholics of the said province merely attained 188,309. Now, complete the proportion with 88,325 non-Catholics of Manitoba compared with 14,651 Catholics in the same province and the result will show that we are less "insignificant" in Manitoba than are the Protestants in Quebec, and

consequently that the Catholics have just as much rights here as Protestants have there; and the effort to do away with the Catholic schools in Manitoba would be as unconstitutional, as unjust and shameful as any attempt which would tend to deprive the Protestants of Quebec of similar acquired rights.

(b) The adversaries of denominational schools affirm and repeat that what they call public, common or national schools are far superior to separate, free or independent schools. Those who make such affirmation, as a rule, have never put a foot in a Catholic school, they have never examined and studied their curriculum, they have never been in a position or have never desired to know anything about them; they know nothing but their own schools, and, with the self-commendation which characterizes men who know nothing but themselves and their immediate surroundings, pronounce the schools of others to be of no value. Catholics have some reasons to console themselves of what their adversaries affirm gratuitously.

Catholic parents or their true friends cannot be so stupid or so blind as to be ignorant of what is going on in their midst, and if, in reality, the education in their schools was so inferior, they would provide for the deficiency. I, sometimes, meet with people who boast much of the superiority of their educational system, and I must confess that I fail to perceive the application of their wonderful theories. Two modes of education may differ in their details and be equally good or equally bad, or superior in one point and inferior in another. The Catholic system is better known among its promoters and supporters than by people who have no chance or desire to become acquainted with it. It is a big, big affair to have a full knowledge of a system of education, its result on individuals, families, or even on society in general. Long experience, deep knowledge, broad views are required, besides a sound intellect, to comprehend the multiple aspects of an educational system. I have no hesitation to say that the scribes who arraigned the Catholic school with such levity prove that they themselves are not prepared for such an important task. At all events, Catholics cherish their institutions, and they are the most interested, they think that it rests with them to decide, happy as they are to find now and then out of their body ample proof to corroborate their own convictions. We will select one which is recorded in public documents by the Government of Manitoba, and which we are sure, is very little known among the would-be destroyers of Catholic schools in our midst. In the fall of 1885 Sir Charles Tupper visited the province with the view of having it taking part in the inter-colonial exhibition which was to take place in England during the following year. The Catholic section of the

Board of Education was invited to help in the exhibit. The proposition at first was met with little favor, it was after vacation; the schools had hardly organized for the new year; there was no time to prepare anything new; nevertheless, the Canadian commissioner was so pressing, that objections were overruled, and a collection was made in some of the nearest schools out of the work of the pupils of the previous year. The most advanced had left their classes, some of the best work had been lost or carried away, and none had been prepared in view of the exhibition. Eight schools furnished samples of their work in different branches, the whole was forwarded to England, it was exhibited there, it attracted so much attention that every article exhibited was examined, re-examined in such a way that when they were returned their condition proved that they had passed through a great many hands. A diploma of merit and a medal of honor were sent to each of the schools, as well as to their superintendent, who had contributed to the exhibit, and we had a proof that such complimentary recognition was not merely a matter of form. Capt. W. Clarke, as every one knows, was the Manitoba representative at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, and here is the way the gallant and intelligent representative wrote to the Superintendent of Catholic Schools in Manitoba:-

"London, 27th July, 1886.
DEAR SIR.—I can speak from experience with reference to the excellence of your section, two of my daughters having been for a long time with the good Sisters of St. Boniface, where their progress was as satisfactory to me as it was pleasant to them.

I am, sir,
Your Obedient Servant,
(Signed) WILLIAM CLARKE."

T. A. Bernier, Esq.,
Supt. of Education.

Mr. Clarke, is not a Catholic, nor has he shown any tendencies towards Rome, but through his daughters he has acquired some knowledge of a Catholic school in Manitoba, and so was prepared to acknowledge without surprise the merit of their exhibit.

Sir Charles Tupper is not a Catholic neither, and is known all over for his superiority and patriotism; here is the way that the Canadian High Commissioner speaks of the Catholic schools of Manitoba :

"COLONIAL AND INDIAN EXHIBITION, 1886.
CANADIAN SECTION.
LONDON, 29th July, 1886.

To T. H. Bernier, Esq.

"MY DEAR SIR.—I duly received your letter of the 3rd inst., and thank you for the memorandum which you have prepared on behalf of your section of the Manitoba educational exhibit. I shall be pleased to receive a thousand copies of the memorandum and to see that they are carefully distributed. The exhibit which you have taken such pains to collect has already attracted considerable attention, and I do not doubt it will add to the success of the Dominion at the exhibition.

I remain, yours faithfully,
[Signed] CHAS. TUPPER.

Is it possible "Can anything good come from (that sort of) Nazareth?" Yes, friends, come and see that Sir Charles Tupper does not hesitate to say that the exhibition of the ordinary work of the pupils of Catholic schools of Manitoba will "add to the success of the Dominion at the exhibition." If you are not satisfied with such testimonies, listen to the following remarks published in the Canadian Gazette of London on the 4th of November, 1886:

"It is generally believed that of all the sister-provinces, that of Manitoba is the least advanced towards civilization. We already know that in many respects such is not the case; but if we consider the excellent ecclesiastic exhibition of that province, we see in what degree that impression is erroneous, especially in the matter of education.

"The collection contains samples of books, exercises, scholastic material, etc., etc., coming from the Catholic schools as well as from the Protestant schools of the province.

"The excellence of the work, and especially of the geographical charts, is incontestable. This is the more pleasing if we consider the fact that many exhibits are dated from the year 1881 and the beginning of the year 1885. It is evident the exhibit is composed of the ordinary duties of the schools in all the parts of the province, and not of work specially prepared for the occasion."

"No pretension has been made to eclipse the school exhibits of the other provinces; but the collection that is under our eyes denotes that in one of the most recently "organized" provinces of the Confederation there exists a school system, which, although respecting the faith and religious convictions of the population, offers to every one an education capable of fitting for the highest rank of the society, the child who is placed under its care."

(c) That school of Brandon!!!—The Brandon Sun of the 8th instant serves its readers with a piece of queer information. It speaks of the convent of Brandon as if there were in that institution an average attendance of only 20 pupils with five teachers, and he exclaims: "Imagine five teachers in a school of twenty children, or one teacher for each four pupils!" Undoubtedly such a state of affairs would be very funny; I regret to spoil the fun, in positively affirming that the statement is not what it ought to be. Looking at the last report published by the Government for the Catholic section of the board of education I find, that during the two terms provided for during the year 1888, there were on the roll of the Brandon school 83 pupils; the family and first names being given on the school report, as well as the age of the children and all the information required; the register of the school during the year, taking 200 days as the basis of the calculation, given an average attendance of 50 children; two sisters were employed in inculcating to the 83 children the knowledge required by the curriculum. According to regulations, 83 children of different grades are a sufficient number to consider the school as a double one, requiring two teachers, and entitled on that account to a double share of Government grant; this is all for the school of Brandon if it were

merely an elementary school, and, in fact, it is all that falls under the law of education.

There is no provision in the law forbidding an elementary school from enjoying more privileges if the opportunity is offered; and especially when nothing is taken for that object, either from Government grant or from ratepayers. The Catholic school of Brandon secures such advantages to those of the pupils whose parents wish that their children might enjoy them.

Instrumental music is not one of the branches prescribed by the curriculum of the elementary schools, but many young ladies of Brandon have a special taste for such an acquirement, and in the convent they find a good sister able and willing to satisfy such tastes and that sister is the third teacher, and it is known that she has plenty of work. Ornamental drawing, painting, embroidery, fancy needle work and many other such things, very pleasant to young ladies of refined dispositions are not on the programme of elementary schools, but they are taught in the Brandon convent, and to avoid interfering with the teaching of ordinary branches another sister is in charge of the department; that brings the number of teachers to four. Another lady of the convent is also there for the general supervision; to answer the calls of visitors, so preventing the sister to be disturbed during class hours. That sister being like her companions, a well accomplished teacher, is there to help or replace them in case of sickness or other emergencies, so that no time could be lost, nor the progress of children retarded. This last one is the fifth teacher spoken of and as well as the third and the fourth mentioned above, is not the teacher of the ordinary course, and consequently receives no part of the Government grant nor from the assessment levied on ratepayers.

I confess my inability to find fault with the arrangement of such a school, and I wonder if any man versed in educational matters would dare to, I do not say ridicule, but even to speak against an institution because it is thus provided, though receiving through the law merely the support given to the ordinary elementary schools. I know the convent of Brandon, it is a beautiful house with fine class rooms, well lighted and well ventilated; the education and the training given there are superior. The whole establishment is undoubtedly a credit to the eastern part of the city, and a valued benefit to the school population. But that school is a terrible burden, it costs so much to the country! Well, as we have said above, that school is considered as two schools, receiving from the government grant what is prescribed by law, that is to say \$150 each, also the portion of the balance of the government grant which the law prescribes to divide according to the aver-

age attendance, that brings the amount of public money to \$425 or about; and as this and other such accounts are published every year in the Blue Books of Manitoba, it does not require a very extraordinary amount of intelligence or care, nor a new system of passing the public accounts to arrive to its discovery. If the Catholic ratepayers, as the San says, really add only \$150.00 to the Government grant, surely they are very fortunate, because then the whole amount paid to the good sisters would be altogether \$575.00; therefore, here is a body of English ladies, perfectly qualified to give a high education and training to children, who give accommodation in a fine house of their own, on a beautiful spot; who furnish it, heat it, keep it in repair and good order; who give primary education to the children of the district, who supply the school with the necessary staff; and all that for \$575.00.

I would like to know how many effective schools with such a number of children cost less than the school of Brandon. Besides, the money given was taken from the part of the legislative grant already apportioned to the Catholic schools, consequently it was the money belonging to and under the control of the Catholic section, and if the money had not been given to the school at Brandon, it would have been given to some other Catholic school.

According to the report for 1887, the amount of public money given to the Sisters of Brandon was for the first term \$114, and for the second \$123, the increase for 1888 was due to the change in the law.

(d.) Reserve Fund.—Another cry against the Catholic schools is that the section of the Board of Education which controls them, have secured a reserve fund to facilitate their management. The fund was increased according to circumstances, and over \$2,000 of interest have brought the whole to over \$13,000. As ordered, at the time, by the law, the money was placed in a chartered bank, with the knowledge and approval of the Government, a yearly account was given to the Government, there was no secrecy about it; the section counts a member of the Government in its ranks; he knew the details of the whole affair, so it required no effort on the part of the public men to know everything about the said fund. The moment the Government asked to have that money placed in their hands it was immediately done, and there the money is. Badly disposed people may find fault with a saving of money, as others will blame for expenditures. Anything these days is resorted to to reach one's end.

But how could one section of the board have thought of a reserve fund? The answer is very easy. It is simply because the law directed that it could be done. The 90th clause of the school law says: "Each section of the board may reserve for unforeseen contingencies a sum not

"exceeding ten per cent of its share of the appropriation." Such is the law, it may seem very foolish to some as it seemed tolerably wise to others; at all events the Catholic section being empowered by the law, took that course and reserved for unforeseen contingencies a sum a little less than ten per cent of its share of the different appropriations. But why have they done so? The answer is this: From the beginning of the province it was found, and the experience is not altered at this date, that the teachers of our schools, besides the insufficiency of their salary, had often to serve a full term of five months before receiving even anything on account on their salary, and after the terms were over, sometimes they had to wait two months and more before their well-earned wages were paid; this seemed a great inconvenience which could only be remedied, and in fact was remedied, in having a reserve fund. The moment an account became due and approved by the section of the Board, the superintendent paid it out of the reserve fund; and when the Government thought it convenient to give an installment of the voted money, it was deposited in the bank to fill up again or increase the reserve fund, and so forth from term to term and from installment to installment. By acting that way, the Section of the Board avoided what is always unpleasant, to apply repeatedly to the Government officers and many times to be delayed by them.

They avoided also, which is of more grave consequence, the painful obligation of delaying the payment of the money due to the teachers and others who had served the cause of education. If this is a fault, I accept the responsibility, as chairman of the Catholic section of the Board of Edu-

cation; but I cannot abstain from stating that a Government which would find such a condition of affairs in all the state departments, when it is explicitly authorized by the law, should easily acquiesce in the results it has brought about. This is called "misappropriation" by certain parties and the remittance of this reserve fund is also, with bad taste, called "disgorging," but I trust that the fair play and good sense of the public will give the action of the Catholic section of the board in this matter, its true appellation and will view it in its proper light.

I must confess, in conclusion, that I had some difficulty in abstaining from the expression of the feeling of indignation raised in my mind by the way which we, as Catholics, are treated by many of our opponents; it is plain and evident that all the dangerous commotions just now being raised has nothing else in view but to injure Catholics as Catholics. I do not know what is in store for the Catholics of this country, but I unhesitatingly say that while abstaining from attacks on others, the Catholics are fully determined in taking their stand. With the help of Divine Providence, under the protection of the constitution, and strong with the sacredness of their cause, they will, to protect their rights, go to as great lengths as others to injure them. The gravest consequences may result, but the responsibility will rest on those who provoke the contest and who boast that "they do not care for the letter of the constitution."

With thanks, Mr. Editor, I remain
Your obedient servant,
+ ALEX.,
Arch. of St. Boniface, O.M.I.
St. Boniface, 21 August, 1889.

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